

chureyard of Petersham, Surrey. In the presence of about 300 visitors, including representatives of the Canadian government, the Lord Mayor of London (Sir Frederick Wells) planted a 5-ft. high specimen of the madrona (*Arbutus Menziesii*) supplied by the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew. The madrona is native in western North America, from British Columbia to California, and is noteworthy as being the largest representative of the Ericaceae. Its name commemorates Archibald Menzies, surgeon and botanist to the expedition, who was the first of many botanists to visit and collect at King George's Sound.

On his return from the Pacific, Vancouver settled in Surrey, first at Richmond and then at the neighbouring village of Petersham, to complete the account of his voyage which was published in the year of his death, 1798, with the title, *A Voyage of Discovery to the North Pacific Ocean and Round the World*. An account of King George's Sound is given in vol. 1, chapters 2 and 3 of this work.

—J. SOUSTER, Kew, Surrey, U.K.

A Strange "Ant-friend" Caterpillar.—Early in November, 1948 the Museum received a strange caterpillar found at Boyup Brook by a school-girl, Maureen Buttriss. The creature was shaped rather like a wood-louse, was about $\frac{3}{4}$ in. in length, had a corrugated surface and was coloured a rich blue, the summits of the folds being bright red. It would seem from previous observations that the moth lays its eggs upon some homopterous insect upon which the caterpillar feeds in its early stages. It then pupates and in due course emerges not as a moth but as another caterpillar which makes its way to an ants' nest, where it again feeds and duly pupates, in this case giving rise to an insignificant brown moth—a specimen of which was bred out at the Museum in 1941. A Cyclotornid moth with a similar life history was described by P. F. Dodd in north Queensland some 38 years ago. There is no mention in the literature of this family being found in any other part of the continent, outside of South-western Australia. The family contains only one described genus, *Cyclotorna*, to which our specimens probably belong though they have not yet been taxonomically studied. The Boyup Brook caterpillar was found in the nest of the well-known meat ant (*Iridomyrmex detectus*).

—L. GLAUERT, W.A. Museum, Perth.

An Enormous Ant Colony.—A colony of the gravelly meat ant *Iridomyrmex detectus* found on the way to the Cascades, near Gosnells, during the club excursion on September 5, 1948, was measured approximately and found to be of enormous size. The main body of the colony extended downhill in a south-eastward direction over a length of over 900 yards and had 17 mounds all connected by busy lines of workers. Lateral trails connected some of the main mounds with side mounds. In one case there was a side-mound 38 yards to the south-west, connected by trail to another mound 72 yards to the west, the latter in turn connected to a smaller mound 13 yards to the north-west. In another case the trail from the main